

THE WISCONSIN ECONOMY

SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY

LEADING INDICATORS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT FEBRUARY GIVE MIXED SIGNALS. THE COMPOSITE INDEX OF LEADING INDICATORS DECREASED, BUT SOME OF THAT IS DUE TO EMPLOYERS RETAINING WORKERS AND DECREASING WORKWEEK HOURS.

EMPLOYMENT INCREASES AND UNEMPLOYMENT DECREASES COMBINED TO LOWER THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE. THE SIZE OF THE LABOR FORCE CHANGED LITTLE THAT'S UNUSUAL FOR FEBRUARY.

LEADING INDICATORS

The composite index of leading indicators decreased in the January to February period. Movement of the indicators included in the composite index is mixed; some are showing positive economic signs, others are sending negative signals.

The average workweek in manufacturing industries decreased in February. Normally, the average workweek increases in that month, but employers will cut back on overtime if hiring more, or if retaining workers in anticipation of increased orders.

The average overtime hours per week for manufacturing production workers decreased. Some decrease is usual in February, but this month's fewer overtime hours is due to more than just seasonal variation. Manufacturing employment did not decrease as much as seasonal factors dictate for February, thus, employers seem to be opting for a shorter workweek rather than laying off employees.

The average weekly number of initial claims for unemployment compensation decreased by

nearly 3,000 during February. The claims figure usually decreases in February, rather sharply, but this month's drop is more than just a seasonal variation.

The number of job openings received by state Job Service offices decreased, but only slightly. The openings received figure is the number of openings for employment which employers place to recruit new employees. The openings received figure normally decreases in February, but this month's decline is less than usual. Thus, when adjusted for seasonal variation, the trend is up.

OTHER INDICATORS

The Help-Wanted Advertising Index remained at a depressed 51 for February. The index is calculated on a base year of 1967 equal to 100. This is the third straight month that the index has remained unchanged.

New car registrations declined in February. Some of the decrease in new car sales is due to seasonal factors, but not all. The trend is down slightly. Registrations had been increasing during the last part of last year, and that may have taken the edge off of the new year's sales.

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE

Wisconsin's labor situation continued to improve during the January to February period. The unemployment rate decreased both in actual amount and in the seasonally adjusted trend. Total unemployment decreases nearly matched gains of employment. But, the size of the labor force was just about static. The labor force normally grows in February.

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WISCONSIN ECONOMIC INDICATORS

INDICATOR	UNIT	MONTHLY SERIES			% CHANGE		A/G.	
		Latest Month		Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	1983
LEADING INDICATORS								
L1 COMPOSITE INDEX OF LEADING INDICATORS								
Seasonally Adjusted	INDEX	67.5	Feb	70.0	42.1	-3.6	60.3	58.2
L2 AVG. WORK WEEK, MFG.								
Unadjusted	HOURS	41.3	Feb	41.5	40.0	-0.5	3.2	40.7
Seasonally Adjusted		41.3		41.6	39.9	-0.7	3.5	
L3 AVG. OVERTIME HOURS, MFG.								
Unadjusted	HOURS	3.3	Feb	3.4	2.3	-2.9	43.5	2.8
Seasonally Adjusted		3.3		3.6	2.3	-8.3	43.5	
L4 AVG. WEEKLY INITIAL CLAIMS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	10,839	Feb	13,761	18,408	-21.2	-41.1	14,694
Seasonally Adjusted		10,120		11,089	17,183	-8.7	-41.1	
L5 TOTAL JOB OPENINGS REC.								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	6,207	Feb	6,310	3,466	-1.6	79.1	7,099
Seasonally Adjusted		9,061		8,100	5,060	11.9	79.1	
L6 NEW BUSINESS INCORPORATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	551	Feb	573	431	-3.8	27.8	544
Seasonally Adjusted		670		640	524	4.7	27.9	
L7 NET GAIN IN BUSINESS PHONES ACCESS LINES								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	-164	Feb	-2,372	898	93.1	-118.3	892
Seasonally Adjusted		93		396	315	-76.5	-70.5	
L8 BUILDING PLANS EXAMINED								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	174	Feb	210	145	-17.1	20.0	275
Seasonally Adjusted		276		305	230	-9.5	20.0	
ROUGHLY COINCIDING INDICATORS								
C1 HELP-WANTED INDEX (MILW.)								
Seasonally Adjusted	INDEX	51	Feb	51	32	0.0	59.4	38
C2 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, TOTAL								
Unadjusted	PERCENT	9.3	Feb	9.9	13.7	-	-	11.3
Seasonally Adjusted		8.4		8.6	11.5	-	-	
C3 NATURAL GAS SALES								
Unadjusted	MIL THERMS	500.6	Dec	281.5	359.3	77.8	39.3	247.9
Seasonally Adjusted		316.2		254.4	227.7	24.3	38.9	
C4 NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	13,354	Feb	14,551	8,841	-8.2	51.1	14,429
Seasonally Adjusted		18,663		21,873	12,355	-14.7	51.1	
C5 ELECTRIC POWER SALES								
Unadjusted	MIL. KWH	1858.5	Dec	1813.2	1595.0	2.5	16.5	1,765
Seasonally Adjusted		1892.0		1835.8	1620.9	3.1	16.7	
C6 TOTAL SECURITIES REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	MIL. DOL.	163.4	Feb	109.1	142.2	49.8	14.9	143.3
Seasonally Adjusted		178.6		93.8	155.4	90.4	14.9	

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WISCONSIN ECONOMIC INDICATORS

INDICATOR	UNIT	MONTHLY SERIES			% CHANGE		AVG.	
		Latest Month		Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	1983
C7 PERSONAL INCOME								
Unadjusted	MIL. DOL.	4,707	Nov	4,542	4,337	3.6	8.5	
Seasonally Adjusted		4,597		4,506	4,234	2.0	8.6	
C8 AVG. WEEKLY EARNINGS, MFG.								
Unadjusted	DOLLARS	418.37	Feb	421.64	388.87	-0.8	7.6	398.01
Seasonally Adjusted		415.05		422.48	385.97	-1.8	7.5	
C9 CASH RECEIPTS FROM FARM MKTG.								
Unadjusted	MIL. DOL.	430.8	Dec	460.7	510.6	-6.5	-15.6	415.3
Seasonally Adjusted		408.2		413.8	484.3	-1.4	-15.7	
C10 CONTRACT CONSTRUCTION EMPL.								
Unadjusted	THOUS	49.5	Feb	51.0	45.2	-2.9	9.5	55.0
Seasonally Adjusted		61.6		60.7	56.3	1.5	9.4	
OTHER KEY INDICATORS								
X1 BIRTH REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	5,461	Feb	6,626	5,344	-17.6	2.2	6,006
Seasonally Adjusted		5,118		6,287	5,009	-18.6	2.2	
X2 DEATH REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	3,346	Feb	4,323	3,358	-22.6	-0.4	3,391
Seasonally Adjusted		3,220		3,295	3,233	-2.3	-0.4	
X3 NATURAL NET GAIN POPULATION								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	2,115	Feb	2,303	1,986	-8.2	6.5	2,615
Seasonally Adjusted		1,973		3,108	1,853	27.0	6.5	
X4 MARRIAGE REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	1,460	Feb	2,205	1,574	-33.8	-7.2	3,340
Seasonally Adjusted		3,832		3,408	2,851	12.4	34.4	
X5 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (MILW.)								
Unadjusted	INDEX	314.0	Jan	312.5	305.0	0.5	3.0	309.5
X6 PRICES RECEIVED BY FARMERS								
Unadjusted	INDEX	145	Feb	147	145	-1.4	0	142
Seasonally Adjusted		143		145	143	-1.4	0	
X7 NET GAIN IN RESIDENTIAL PHONES ACCESS LINES								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	-510	Feb	-920	407	44.6	179.8	872
Seasonally Adjusted		716		1,889	174	-62.1	311.5	
X8 LABOR DISPUTES, NO. OF WORKERS								
Unadjusted	THOUS.	1,089	Feb	394	70	176.4	1455.7	2,542
Seasonally Adjusted		2,843		874	183	225.3	1453.6	
X9 MANUFACTURING EMPL.								
Unadjusted	THOUS.	494.8	Feb	495.0	465.1	-0.0	6.4	486.0
Seasonally Adjusted		504.9		504.6	474.5	0.1	6.4	

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LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES FEBRUARY	(In Thousands)			Pct. Chg.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	2421.7	2421.1	2433.4	0.0	-0.7
Employment (Inc. Labor Disputes)	2195.3	2181.5	2104.1	0.6	4.3
Unemployment	226.4	239.6	334.3	-5.5	-32.3
Unemployment Rate	9.3	9.9	13.7	-	-
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	2439.0	2439.9	2438.9	0.0	0.0
Employment (Inc. Labor Disputes)	2233.9	2230.5	2158.2	0.2	3.5
Unemployment	205.1	209.4	280.7	-2.1	-26.9
Unemployment Rate	8.4	8.6	11.5	-	-

WISCONSIN EMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES FEBRUARY	(In Thousands)			Pct. Chg.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
TOTAL NONFARM WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS	1850.2	1843.6	1801.5	0.4	2.7
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Manufacturing	493.8	494.7	465.1	-0.2	6.2
Mining	1.6	1.8	1.4	-11.1	14.3
Contract Construction	49.5	51.0	45.2	-2.9	9.5
Transportation and Public Utilities	84.9	84.7	84.2	0.2	0.8
Elec., Gas and Sanitary Services	16.7	16.7	16.6	0	0.6
Wholesale Trade	96.6	96.6	93.6	0	3.2
Retail Trade	320.1	321.4	315.0	-0.4	1.6
General Merchandise	42.4	43.7	43.1	-3.0	-1.6
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	96.6	96.9	95.7	-0.3	0.9
Banking	26.9	26.9	26.5	0	1.5
Insurance	31.6	31.7	32.6	-0.3	-3.1
Service and Miscellaneous	387.0	383.2	379.8	1.0	1.9
Hospitals	72.4	73.2	149.7	-1.1	-51.6
Private Education	22.8	21.4	23.6	6.5	-3.4
Government	320.2	313.3	321.5	2.2	-0.4
State Government	79.8	78.1	80.6	2.2	-1.0
Local Government	212.7	207.5	213.2	2.5	-0.2

UNITED STATES LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES FEBRUARY	(In Thousands)			Pct. Chg.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	112,693	112,215	110,688	0.4	1.8
Employment	103,892	103,190	99,172	0.7	4.8
Unemployment	8,801	9,026	11,516	-2.5	-23.6
Unemployment Rate	7.8	8.0	10.4	-	-

MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT (Unadjusted) FEBRUARY	(In Thousands)		
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago
All Manufacturing (Including Canning)	493.8	494.7	465.1
All Manufacturing (Excluding Canning)	487.7	488.6	459.2
Durable Goods	310.6	310.6	286.1
Lumber and Wood Prod., (Except Furniture)	20.6	20.7	18.2
Sawmills and Planning Mills	2.7	2.7	2.6
Millwork, Veneer, Plywood & Prefab. Wood Prod.	9.2	9.2	8.3
Furniture and Fixtures	9.3	9.6	8.5
Household Furniture	4.5	4.5	4.0
Stone, Clay and Glass Products	7.7	7.7	6.7
Concrete, Gypsum and Plaster Products	3.1	3.2	2.6
Primary Metal Industries	19.0	18.8	16.8
Iron and Steel Foundries	10.4	10.2	9.0
Fabricated Metal Products	50.4	50.2	47.4
Heating Equipment (Except Electrical) & Plumbing Fixtures	5.0	5.0	4.8
Fabricated Structural Metal Products	11.9	12.1	11.1
Metal Stampings	12.6	12.4	12.1
Machinery (Except Electrical)	98.1	97.6	91.2
Engines and Turbines	21.3	21.2	19.7
Farm Machinery and Equipment	12.9	12.8	11.3
Const., Min. & Material Handling Mach. & Equip.	13.4	13.3	11.8
Metalworking Machinery and Equipment	9.9	9.9	9.8
Special Industry Machinery (Except Metalworking)	9.6	9.6	10.0
General Industrial Machinery and Equipment	13.7	13.7	12.6
Service Industry Machines	7.3	7.2	7.3
Electrical Machinery, Equipment and Supplies	49.7	49.6	46.7
Electrical Industrial Apparatus	17.6	17.4	16.6
Household Appliances	6.3	6.4	6.1
Transportation Equipment	35.6	36.4	30.9
Motor Vehicles and Equipment	28.6	29.4	24.8
Instruments and Related Products	10.1	10.1	10.0
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	10.1	9.9	9.9
Nondurable Goods	183.2	184.1	179.0
Food and Kindred Products	57.3	57.8	56.9
Meat Products	13.3	13.3	12.6
Dairy Products	16.5	16.8	16.4
Canning and Preserving	6.1	6.1	5.9
Bakery Products	4.7	4.9	4.8
Beverage Industries	9.5	9.5	10.3
Textile Mill Products	4.4	4.3	3.8
Knitting Mills	3.6	3.5	3.1
Apparel and Other Finished Products	6.7	6.7	6.2
Paper and Allied Products	45.6	46.2	45.2
Pulp and Paper Mills	28.1	28.9	28.2
Converted Paper and Paperboard Products	9.2	9.2	8.8
Paperboard Containers and Boxes	7.1	7.0	7.0
Printing, Publishing and Allied Industries	33.3	33.0	32.4
Newspapers	10.6	10.6	10.4
Commercial Printing	13.9	13.8	13.2
Chemicals and Allied Products	9.1	9.1	9.0
Rubber and Misc. Plastics Products	18.1	18.0	16.6
Miscellaneous Plastics Products	13.8	13.8	12.7
Leather and Leather Products	8.5	8.6	8.5
Leather Tanning and Finishing	2.4	2.5	2.5
Footwear (Except Rubber)	4.3	4.4	4.4

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WISCONSIN EARNINGS AND HOURS DATA

EARNINGS AND HOURS (Unadjusted) FEBRUARY	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours		
	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago
All Manufacturing (Incl. Canning)	\$418	\$422	\$389	41.3	41.5	40.0
All Manufacturing (Excl. Canning)	420	423	391	41.4	41.5	40.1
Durable Goods	431	434	396	41.7	41.9	40.0
Lumber/Wood Prod. (Exc. Furn.)	303	306	281	40.9	41.1	39.4
Furniture and Fixtures	316	312	289	42.0	41.5	40.5
Stone, Clay and Glass Products	391	379	349	42.6	41.7	41.0
Primary Metal Industries	408	403	366	42.2	42.0	39.1
Iron and Steel Foundries	421	412	361	42.6	42.1	38.0
Fabricated Metal Products	409	414	385	40.8	41.4	39.7
Fab. Structural Metal Prod.	409	429	393	41.8	42.7	39.9
Metal Stampings	381	394	354	39.4	40.2	38.0
Machinery (Except Electrical)	493	495	439	42.5	42.6	39.6
Engines and Turbines	570	572	477	44.2	44.4	38.8
Farm Machinery and Equip.	494	498	481	41.2	41.4	40.5
Const. and Related Mach.	477	481	444	39.9	40.1	39.6
Metalworking Mach. and Equip.	495	492	426	42.9	42.6	39.1
Spec. Ind. Mach. (Exc. Metal)	509	511	456	46.6	46.7	43.8
Gen. Industrial Mach. and Equip.	480	483	434	41.3	41.5	39.1
Electrical Mach., Equip. and Supp.	389	392	371	41.0	41.4	40.2
Electrical Industrial Apparatus	413	415	389	40.7	40.9	39.0
Transportation Equipment	553	568	530	42.5	43.2	42.2
Instruments and Related Prod.	331	327	310	39.8	38.9	37.3
Nondurable Goods	397	401	378	40.7	40.9	40.1
Food and Kindred Products	381	385	377	39.0	38.9	39.2
Meat Products	382	386	403	38.7	38.1	39.2
Dairy Products	368	370	353	39.5	39.4	39.3
Textile Mill Products	277	273	258	38.7	38.5	38.6
Apparel and Other Fin. Prod.	217	218	212	36.4	36.5	37.2
Paper and Allied Products	491	494	446	45.0	45.4	43.4
Pulp and Paper Mills	531	529	479	46.5	46.4	44.7
Printing, Pub. and Allied Prod.	442	439	400	39.8	39.7	37.5
Chemicals and Allied Products	451	446	423	43.3	42.0	41.3
Rubber and Misc. Plastics Prod.	325	330	313	40.1	40.4	40.0
Leather and Leather Products.	255	261	259	38.6	39.2	38.8

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WISCONSIN EARNINGS AND HOURS DATA

EARNINGS AND HOURS (Unadjusted) FEBRUARY	Average Hourly Earnings Including O.T.			Average Hourly Earnings Excluding O.T.		
	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago
All Manufacturing (Incl. Canning)	10.13	10.16	9.72	9.72	9.74	9.45
All Manufacturing (Excl. Canning)	10.15	10.19	9.76	9.74	9.77	9.49
Durable Goods	10.33	10.36	9.89	9.94	9.96	9.70
Lumber/Wood Prod. (Exc. Furn.)	7.42	7.44	7.14	7.33	7.34	7.02
Furniture and Fixtures	7.52	7.52	7.13	7.33	7.32	7.12
Stone, Clay and Glass Products	9.19	9.08	8.52	8.80	8.79	8.40
Primary Metal Industries	9.66	9.60	9.36	9.28	9.23	9.15
Iron and Steel Foundries	9.88	9.78	9.52	9.51	9.45	9.35
Fabricated Metal Products	10.03	10.00	9.70	9.59	9.59	9.41
Fab. Structural Metal Prod.	9.78	10.05	9.84	9.43	9.59	9.62
Metal Stampings	9.66	9.79	9.31	9.47	9.54	9.16
Machinery (Except Electrical)	11.61	11.62	11.10	11.14	11.15	10.95
Engines and Turbines	12.89	12.88	12.28	12.04	12.05	12.17
Farm Machinery and Equip.	12.00	12.03	11.89	11.76	11.76	11.69
Const. and Related Mach.	11.96	12.00	11.22	11.84	11.84	11.04
Metalworking Mach. and Equip.	11.55	11.56	10.88	11.13	11.09	10.85
Spec. Ind. Mach. (Exc. Metal)	10.92	10.94	10.42	10.54	10.50	10.16
Gen. Industrial Mach. and Equip.	11.62	11.63	11.09	11.21	11.25	10.83
Electrical Mach., Equip. and Supp.	9.49	9.46	9.23	9.26	9.24	9.12
Electrical Industrial Apparatus	10.15	10.14	9.96	9.96	9.94	9.94
Transportation Equipment	13.00	13.14	12.57	12.42	12.50	12.12
Instruments and Related Prod.	8.32	8.40	8.33	8.09	8.20	-
Nondurable Goods	9.75	9.80	9.43	9.32	9.35	9.05
Food and Kindred Products	9.76	9.89	9.63	9.37	9.46	9.18
Meat Products	9.87	10.14	10.27	9.54	9.78	9.82
Dairy Products	9.32	9.38	8.97	9.00	9.02	8.63
Textile Mill Products	7.16	7.10	6.70	7.02	6.93	6.59
Apparel and Other Fin. Prod.	5.97	5.98	5.70	5.81	5.84	5.57
Paper and Allied Products	10.91	10.89	10.28	10.41	10.36	9.83
Pulp and Paper Mills	11.41	11.40	10.72	10.89	10.84	10.24
Printing, Pub. and Allied Prod.	11.10	11.07	10.65	-	-	-
Chemicals and Allied Products	10.41	10.61	10.24	10.08	10.34	9.99
Rubber and Misc. Plastics Prod.	8.10	8.18	7.82	7.78	7.82	7.63
Leather and Leather Products.	6.61	6.65	6.67	6.47	6.52	6.54

C

SUMMARY OF RECENT WISCONSIN DATA

EARNINGS AND HOURS, MFG. Production Workers (Unadjusted) FEBRUARY	Average Weekly						Average Hourly Earnings				
	Earnings			Hours			Including O.T.			Excluding O.T.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Latest Month	Month Ago
United States	370	368	340	40.7	40.5	38.8	9.09	9.09	8.75	-	-
Wisconsin	418	422	389	41.3	41.5	40.0	10.13	10.16	9.72	9.72	9.74
<i>Selected Areas</i>											
Appleton-Oshkosh (Calumet- Winnebago-Outagamie)	410	418	377	42.4	43.1	41.2	9.68	9.69	9.16	9.25	9.25
Beloit (City)	426	442	398	44.9	46.6	43.9	9.48	9.49	9.07	-	-
Eau Claire (Eau Claire-Chippewa)	394	408	368	39.7	42.3	40.5	9.93	9.65	9.10	9.66	9.40
Fond du Lac (County)	375	378	319	41.4	41.9	39.3	9.06	9.03	8.13	8.81	8.79
Green Bay (Brown County)	441	434	416	41.2	41.0	40.7	10.70	10.59	10.23	10.09	10.01
Janesville (City)	512	615	604	40.0	45.2	47.2	12.82	13.61	12.81	12.61	13.07
Janesville-Beloit (Rock County)	461	526	474	41.3	44.7	44.4	11.17	11.76	10.67	10.89	11.18
Kenosha (County)	488	470	453	41.4	40.1	39.3	11.78	11.72	11.53	11.34	11.36
La Crosse (County)	342	342	346	38.9	39.2	39.6	8.79	8.73	8.75	8.34	8.30
Madison (Dane County)	369	377	374	39.5	40.1	39.5	9.33	9.39	9.46	8.96	9.00
Manitowoc (County)	344	340	305	39.2	38.4	37.3	8.77	8.86	8.17	8.63	8.76
Milwaukee (Milwaukee-Ozaukee- Waukesha-Washington)	472	471	423	41.7	41.8	39.4	11.31	11.26	10.74	10.73	10.70
Racine (County)	431	430	385	41.8	41.4	39.4	10.31	10.38	9.78	9.95	9.98
Sheboygan (County)	377	379	360	39.8	40.3	38.9	9.46	9.40	9.26	9.21	9.13
Wausau (Marathon County)	375	374	353	41.0	40.3	40.0	9.15	9.27	8.82	8.84	8.94

EMPLOYMENT, MFG. (Unadjusted) FEBRUARY	(In Thousands)			Percent Change	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
United States	19,308.0	19,169.0	18,077.0	0.7	6.8
Wisconsin	493.8	494.7	465.1	-0.2	6.2
<i>Selected Areas</i>					
Appleton-Oshkosh (Calumet- Winnebago-Outagamie)	46.1	46.4	43.4	-0.6	6.2
Beloit (City)	5.5	5.6	6.0	-1.8	-8.3
Eau Claire (Eau Claire-Chippewa)	8.6	8.6	8.6	0	0
Fond du Lac (County)	9.5	9.3	9.3	2.2	2.2
Green Bay (Brown County)	20.9	20.7	20.1	1.0	4.0
Janesville (City)	10.8	11.0	8.7	-1.8	24.1
Janesville-Beloit (Rock County)	18.5	18.9	16.7	-2.1	10.8
Kenosha (County)	17.1	17.7	15.9	-3.4	7.6
La Crosse (County)	9.9	10.0	9.8	-1.0	1.0
Madison (Dane County)	18.7	18.8	18.2	-0.5	2.8
Manitowoc (County)	11.1	11.0	11.1	0.9	0
Milwaukee (Milwaukee-Ozaukee- Waukesha-Washington)	169.7	169.4	161.3	0.2	5.2
Racine (County)	24.8	24.9	21.2	-0.4	17.0
Sheboygan (County)	17.6	17.7	16.2	-0.6	8.6
Wausau (Marathon County)	11.4	11.4	10.2	0	11.8

GETTING TO WORK: COMMUTING AND RELOCATING

by Joseph Tumpach, Jr.

Just getting to and from work, five or six days a week, is a two-million employee activity loaded with economic consequences. Though Wisconsin's two million workers bare the direct cost, in time and money, of commuting to and from work, businesses consider labor availability when determining plant location. And worker's commuting imposes a public cost for roads, public transportation, land used for parking and traffic congestion.

Where People live, urban or nonurban areas of Wisconsin, is the link to how far and how long workers commute to work. And, migration within the state between rural, suburban, and metropolitan areas is largely determined by the economics of the state.

In the 19th century, the rural northern frontier of Wisconsin opened up, and its population expanded in response to two major industries: logging and mining. Workers lived on or near the work site. Settlers flooded into the region and an agricultural supporting base followed, attracted by cheap land and a ready market. But, economic decline set in as the vast stands of timber were harvested and the richer mineral deposits were mined. Developments in the transportation industry, better road systems and laying of railroad lines, diminished the nearness-to-market advantage of northern agriculture. The new century ushered in declining growth rates, and many counties in the northern area of the state experienced depopulation.

People were lured to large and growing cities by the great number and diversification of higher paying employment opportunities. Other factors were involved such as the greater array of

social services and cultural opportunities in metropolitan areas. But Wisconsin's growing manufacturing industries concentrated in urban areas; again drawing workers to the cities, close to jobs. The exodus from rural Wisconsin to urban areas continued through the middle of the century. The out migration of population slowed in the 1950's and actually reversed after 1970. This reversal of migration from nonmetropolitan to metropolitan areas occurred in violation of the assumption that the trend toward metropolitan concentration would continue as an inevitable result of national economic development and urban economic dominance. People, however, no longer followed jobs. Almost universal ownership of automobiles and cheap energy fostered the growth of counties adjacent to metropolitan areas. And, state universities and community colleges placed in nonmetropolitan areas had a growth-inducing effect. Rural industrialization and the decentralization of manufacturing began. People traveled farther to work. The onset of the energy crisis and increase of gasoline prices several fold engendered a trend to small fuel-efficient cars, and to car-pooling; thus, the trend of migration from urban areas was not broken.

About one-fifth of Wisconsin's job-holders car pool to work according to the 1980 census. That represents about one-quarter of those using private cars, vans, or trucks. Less than four percent of the state's workers use public transportation. About one out of every 12 workers in the state walk to their job; and one out of 20 have employment at home. Over half of those employed at home are farm owners and operators.

The average commuting time spent by workers getting to and from jobs is 17 minutes, but a substantial number of workers, close to three-quarters of a million, take 20 minutes or more to commute. Workers, it seems, are moving out of metropolitan areas, but not too far.

The population growth of rural counties throughout the state, since the mid-seventies, can be explained by both economic growth in those counties and the migration of elderly retired population to those counties. Surveys have shown that workers migrating between counties for work tend to be highly skilled blue collar workers and professional and managerial white collar workers. Because of this movement of the skilled labor force, the adequacy of skilled and professional labor need not be an overriding factor in plant site location. That population change

is correlated with employment change is well established. The usual scenario is a population-first growth pattern. A county that is situated to attract people-such as proximity to a large city or to another growing county, or such as recreational offering would grow in population before it would grow in employment.

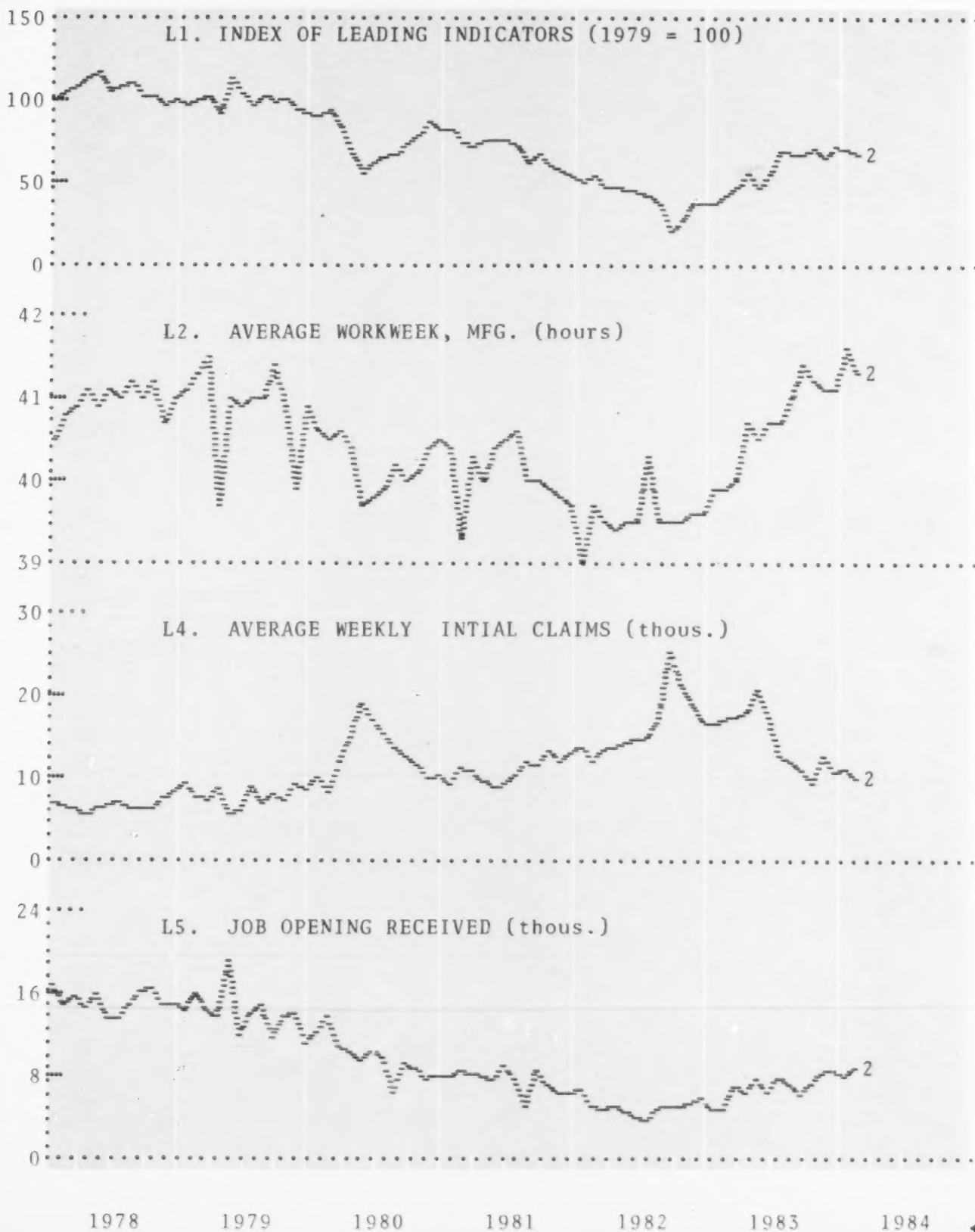
Trade and service industry would follow population growth and employment in those industries would grow. Manufacturing them would enter, because of such factors as the available labor force, increased local services, and increased local planning that could result in favorable land use proposals. A comparable scenario, however, can be made for a manufacturing-first argument. In either case, commuting or relocating of workers and economic growth are inextricably bound together.

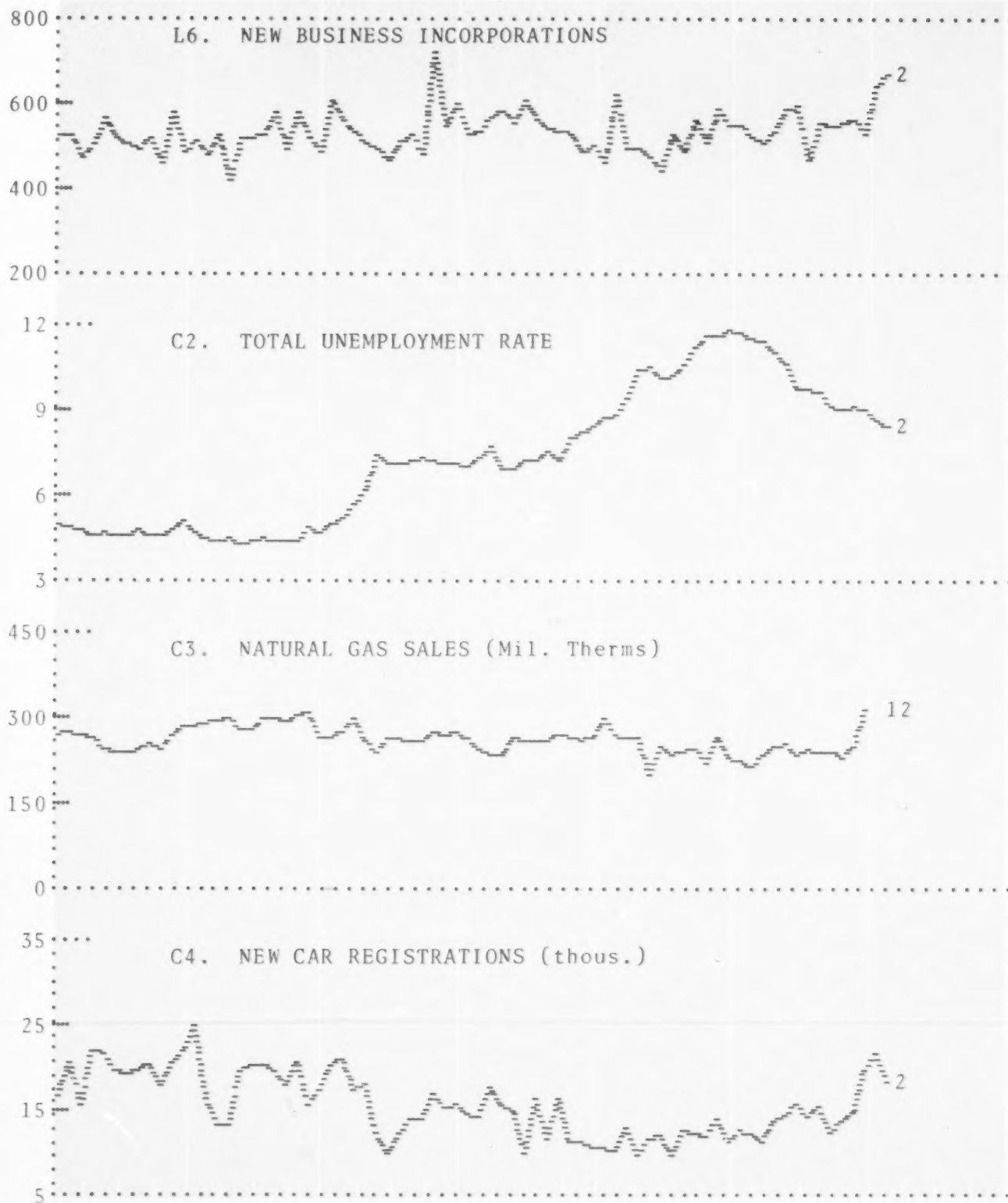
Employment commuting patterns are available from the state's Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations. Data on the number of workers traveling across state lines and traveling into and out of each Wisconsin county are presented. The data are 1980 Census counts. For further information please write or phone:

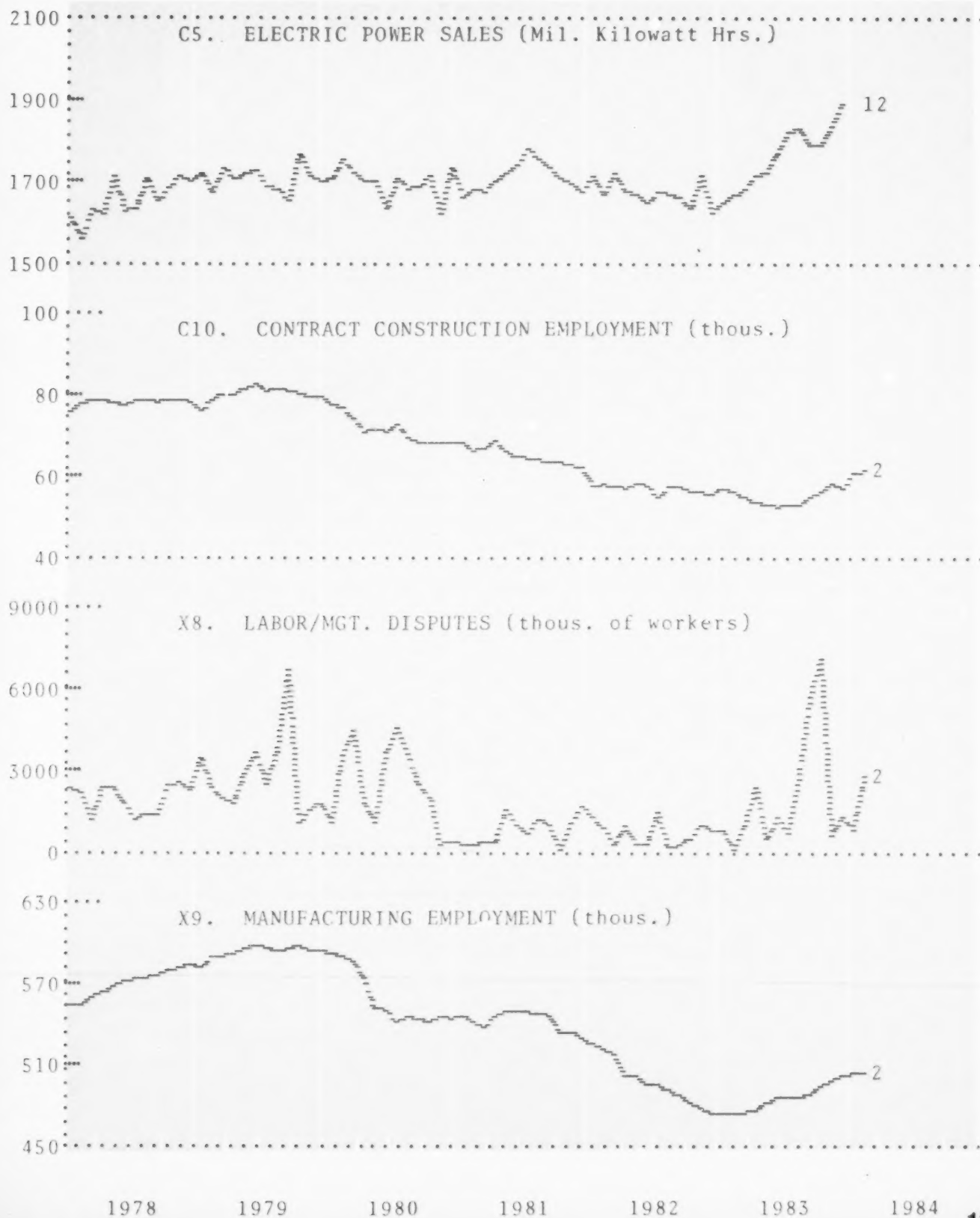
Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
Attn: Debra A. Peterson, Labor Market Information
P. O. Box 7944
Madison, WI 53707

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